REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 5, 2008. Claims 1 to 3, 5 to 7, 9 to 11 and 13 to 18 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 5, 9 and 13 to 18 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Without conceding the correctness of the rejection, Applicants have amended Claim 15 to clarify that the method is performed by an information processing apparatus. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1 to 3, 5 to 7, 9 to 11 and 13 to 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,198526 (Otsuka) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,042,500 (Niikawa '500) and U.S. Patent No. 7,61,618 (Niikawa '618). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns printing in a realtime environment. In one aspect of the invention, a user using an external apparatus sets print settings for image data that is being read out of a detachable memory card that is plugged into the external device. The external device generates an interrupt for a host computer that is coupled to the external device and transmits the image data and the print settings to the host computer. In response to the interrupt, the host computer receives the image data and print settings from the external device and generates a print preview of the image data using the print settings for the external device. By using such a system, a user can obtain a preview of the image data stored in the detachable memory card with a minimal set of keying operations.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a print system comprising an external operating apparatus, a host computer which communicates with the external operating apparatus, and a printer which communicates with the host computer. The external operating apparatus includes reading means for reading out image data from a detachable storage medium; a display unit which displays a print setting screen; an operation panel which is operative to set print settings in accordance with a print setting instruction provided by a user based on the print setting screen displayed on the display unit; a button operative to instruct the host computer to preview the image data read out by the reading means; transmission means for transmitting the image data read out by the reading means, to the host computer in response to the button being operated; and a controller which generates an interruption event for causing the host computer to effect a preview display of the image data transmitted by the transmission means, in accordance with the operation panel setting the print settings after the image data read out by the reading means is transmitted to the host computer by the transmission means so that the generated interruption event includes the print settings set by the operation panel and is transmitted to the host computer. The host computer includes a receiving unit which receives the image data read out by the reading means and then transmitted by the transmission means from the storage medium; a display control unit which receives the interruption event generated by the controller from the external operating apparatus and effects the preview display in which the print settings included in the received interruption event are reflected in the image data received by the receiving unit; and a print control unit which generates print data corresponding to the print setting, wherein the printer prints the print data output from the host computer.

Applicants submit that Ohtsuka, Niikawa '500 and Niikawa '618, whether taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of the present invention. Specifically, Ohtsuka, Niikawa '500 and Niikawa '618 fail to disclose an external device having an operation panel which is operative to set print settings in accordance with a print setting instruction provided by a user based on the print setting screen displayed on a display unit and a controller which generates an interruption event for causing a host computer to effect a preview display of transmitted image data, in accordance with said operation panel setting print settings such that a generated interruption event includes the print settings transmitted to said host computer, wherein said host computer receives the image data read out a storage medium and receives the interruption event from said external operating apparatus and effects a preview display in which the print settings included in the received interruption event are reflected in the image data.

In contrast to the present invention, Ohtsuka discloses a print order system in which a digital camera 3 is arranged to set print conditions and record the set print conditions as attribute information of an image in an image file and this image file is loaded into a PC 4. A user operates the PC 4 to cause it to display the loaded image data and generate a print order file to be recorded on a recording medium 5. The recording medium 5 is then brought into a laboratory by the user, so that an order receiving apparatus 1 receives the image file 9 and order file 10 from the recording medium 5 and prints the image data 6 designated in accordance with image information 11 stored in the order file 10. As such, Ohtsuka merely discloses that the image file 9 and order file 10 may be transmitted to the order receiving apparatus 1 via a network. However, Ohtsuka fails to disclose the mechanism of the transmission. In addition, Ohtsuka is silent as to communication between the camera 3 and the PC 4. Therefore, Ohtsuka

fails to disclose or suggest that the camera 3 generates and transmits an interruption event to the PC 4 every time an operation panel of the camera 3 is operated and the PC 4 executes processing corresponding to the received interruption event. Furthermore, Niikawa '500 discloses a digital camera system including a digital camera 1 connected to a computer 100. As conceded in the Office Action, Ohtsuka and Niikawa '500 fail to disclose or suggest a controller that generates an interruption event in accordance with said operation panel receiving the instruction after the image data read out by said reading means is transmitted to said host computer by said transmission means so that the generated interruption event is transmitted to said host computer.

However, the Office Action relies on Niikawa '618 as disclosing an interrupt feature. Niikawa '618 discloses a system including a digital camera 1, a PC 1000 and a printer Pri, which are connected to each other. (See Fig.5 of Niikawa '618). This system is arranged to display a control process screen such as a menu screen on the camera or the PC (such as ones shown in Figs.7(a) and 7(b)) and generate an event in accordance with a switch listed in the TABLE 1 (column 8) being operated on the displayed screen. In particular, if the switch of the digital camera is operated on the screen displayed on the camera, then the event generation position coordinate of the event is transmitted to the PC. In addition, camera 1 has function keys F1 to F3, each of which may be assigned a function and registered. (See Fig.15 of Niikawa '618). If a function key is depressed, then only the assigned function corresponding to the depressed function key is executed, as described in column 8, starting at line 19 of Niikawa '618. However, while the features of these function keys may disclose generating an event for a function corresponding to the key, no function is disclosed that corresponds to generating an interruption event for causing a host computer to effect a preview display of the image data transmitted thereto, in accordance with the function key being depressed to set the print settings

after the image data is transmitted to the host computer, so that the generated interruption event includes the print settings set by the function assigned to the operated function key and then is transmitted to the host computer, as feature in amended Claim 1.

Therefore, as neither Ohtsuka, Niikawa '500 nor Niikawa '618, whether taken alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the controller functioning together with the operation panel as featured in Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Independent claim 5 is directed to an external operating apparatus of the print system of the Claim 1 and independent Claim 9 is directed to a host computer of the system of Claim 1. Claims 13, 14 and 15 are directed to methods substantially in accordance with Claims 1, 5 and 9, respectively. Claims 16, 17 and 18 are directed to computer-readable storage media substantially in accordance with the Claims 1, 5 and 9, respectively. Therefore, Applicants submit that Claims 5, 9 and 13 to 18 are also in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

CONCLUSION

No claim fees are believed due; however, should it be determined that additional claim fees are required, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Frank Cire #42,419/
Frank . Cire
Attorney for Applicants

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

FCHS_WS 2901664v1